

THE U IN FLU—Are U Ready?

9 tips to get ready for the 2010-2011 influenza season

Infection Preventionists

- **Collaborate with your occupational health program to encourage widespread vaccination of hospital staff before the season**

Influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons age 6 months and older and for all healthcare workers.

- **Initiate or maintain the cough etiquette program in your hospital.**

See the following website for information on cough etiquette:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphgiene.htm>

- **Collaborate with your occupational health program to encourage ill healthcare workers to stay home.**

Educate your healthcare workers (HCW) to stay home if they develop febrile respiratory illness. HCW should stay home until free of fever for 24 hours, off antipyretic medications. For more detailed guidance, see:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/healthcaresettings.htm>

- **If your hospital uses rapid tests for influenza diagnosis, review the limitations of these tests.**

Rapid tests may give false positive results when influenza activity is low and false negative results when influenza activity is high. See:

http://www.wvidep.org/Portals/31/PDFs/IDEP/influenza/Provider_how%20do%20%20interpret%20rapid%20results_revised%20Oct2010.pdf

Share this information with your physicians and laboratory.

- **Know where you can get good quality influenza testing.**

For information on influenza testing, see:

http://www.wvidep.org/Portals/31/PDFs/IDEP/influenza/Provider_how%20do%20%20test%20for%20influenza.pdf

The Office of Laboratory Services can accept specimens from hospital laboratories for confirmation and subtyping. Several other laboratories in the state offer testing by PCR, culture and immunofluorescence (IFA or DFA).

- **Train staff to implement the new influenza isolation guidelines.**

CDC has posted new infection control guidelines on their website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/healthcaresettings.htm>

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- **Know where to get good influenza surveillance data so your personnel can make good decisions about testing, treatment and prophylaxis for flu.**

Current West Virginia influenza surveillance data is available at:

<http://www.wvdeh.org/tabid/1960/Default.aspx>

- **Know your reporting responsibilities.**

Hospitals are required to report the following to the local health department:

Weekly

- Influenza-like illness—*defined as fever $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ and cough or sore throat without another identified cause*—in aggregate

Within a Week

- Pediatric death from influenza.

Immediately

- Novel influenza.

Continue reporting all ICU admissions and deaths among pregnant and up to six weeks post partum women with influenza infection diagnosed by a positive:

- Rapid influenza diagnostic test
- Reverse transcriptase PCR
- DFA/IFA (immunofluorescent antibody)
- Viral culture

Laboratories are required to report the following:

Immediately

- Novel influenza to the local health department.

Weekly

- Positive tests for influenza by culture, PCR or immunofluorescent antibody (IFA or DFA), in aggregate, to the Bureau for Public Health.

- **Help your physicians stay up to date on antiviral treatment and prophylaxis**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/guidance/>